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## General Notes.

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### GEOGRAPHY AND TRAVELS.

AFRICAN VOLCANOES—In 1891, when Emin Pasha started west from Victoria Nyanza on the journey that ended in his violent death, he and his comrade, Dr. Stuhlman, were the first white men to see the big mountain Mfumbiro, 120 miles from the lake which Captain Speke, many years before, had placed on his map on native information. They found that the Mfumbiro was not an isolated cone, but the most eastern of a hitherto unknown range of volcanic origin. Their first purpose was to determine the outlines of Lake Albert Edward, and they did not stop to explore these mountains; but Dr. Stuhlman sent home an interesting report of the natives that Virunga, the most western summit of the chain, was a fire mountain, from whose top smoke was often seen to issue, and from which noises were heard like the bellowing of cattle.

On December 8th a cablegram reached Europe from Count von Gotzen, the German explorer, announcing his arrival on the lower Congo, after crossing Africa from east to west. About the same time a letter he had written in Central Africa, in June last, arrived. It contained brief but interesting detail of his visit to Mount Virunga. There have been reports of plutonic activity among the Rif Mountains in northwestern Morocco, but the hostile natives have prevented investigation. The subterranean forces that formed the great trough and piled up mountains of lava and ashes east of the great lakes show, by solfataras, hot springs and other phenomena, that they are not yet entirely spent. But until the discovery of Mount Virunga, no active volcano was known to exist in Africa.

While still far away Count von Gotzen saw a thin column of smoke ascending from the principal crater, and later he found that the rim of this orifice is 11,400 feet above the sea. The volcano, therefore, is not a snow mountain, and is not so tall as its nearest neighbor on the east, which, according to Stuhlman, is about 13,000 feet high. It took von Gotzen several days to force a passage through the dense forest and to scale the steep mountain side. At last he stood upon the edge of the crater and looked down upon a most interesting spectacle.

The crater is about a mile in diameter, and the top of the encircling wall on which the explorer stood, is about 160 feet above the crater floor. The inner side of the wall was too steep for comfortable descent, and, in view of what was going on at the bottom, there was absolutely no temptation to make the journey.

The yellow-hued bottom of the crater floor was as smooth as the surface of a lake, and the explorer believes he was looking down upon an expanse of molten lava. Above this smooth surface rose the walls of two orifices, which was over 300 feet in diameter; a small volume of smoke was issuing accompanied by a noise that sounded like the roll of distant thunder. There were unmistakable indications that outside of this crater another center of eruption exists on the west side of the mountain, but the explorer was unable to push through the woods to reach it.

For some years a little lake has appeared on the maps some distance south of the place this volcano has been found to occupy. It is Lake Kivu, seen by no white man until von Gotzen stood on its shores soon after he had looked down in the smoking crater. He says the lake stretched away before him like a sea, and, though it was a clear day, he could not see its southern shores. He believes the lake is almost as large as Lake Albert Edward. Its outlet is supposed to be the Rusisi River, which enters the north end of Lake Tanganyika.

It is too early to regard the large prizes of African discovery as all won when such interesting and important results reward research, as those attained by the latest traveler across Africa. (From N. Y. Sun in *Scientific American*, Jan. 5, 1895).